

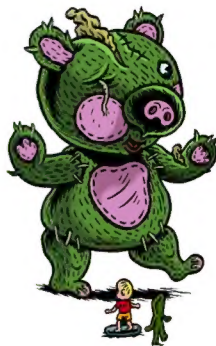


BLANQUET

TOYS IN THE BASEMENT

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FANTAGRAPHICS BOOKS

Also available in English by Stéphane Blanquet:

Dungeon Monstres Book 2: The Dark Lord, written by Lewis Trondheim and Joann Sfar. (NBM)

Edited and translated by Kim Thompson. Book design by Jacob Covey. Production by Paul Baresh. Lettering by Alexa Koenings. Associate Editor: Eric Reynolds. Published by Gary Groth and Kim Thompson. *Toys in the Basement (Chacottes au sous-sol)* © 2005 Editions La Joie de Lire SA. This edition © 2010 Fantagraphics Books. All rights reserved, permission to quote or reproduce material for reviews or notices must be obtained from Fantagraphics Books, in writing, at 7563 Lake City Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115. Visit Fantagraphics online at www.fantagraphics.com. Distributed to bookstores in the U.S. by W.W. Norton and Company, Inc. (212-354-5500). Distributed to comics shops in the U.S. by Diamond Comic Distributors (800-452-6642). Distributed in Canada by Canadian Manda Group (416-516-0911). First edition September, 2010. Printed in Singapore. ISBN 978-1-60699-402-3.



And so the bloodthirstiest pirate of the seven seas had been betrayed by his cheapskate mother, who had picked a slightly less expensive costume for the Halloween party. That's how I found myself dressed, from head to toe, as the pinkest bunnyrabbit that ever was...





Sshh...



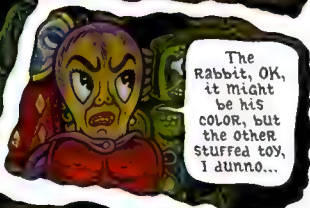














I've never
seen fixtures
like these!

We got them from an
old abandoned toy factory...
Excess inventory. They got
no bodies and they can't talk,
but they understand us and
they're pretty bright...

Look,
they're
blinking
at us...



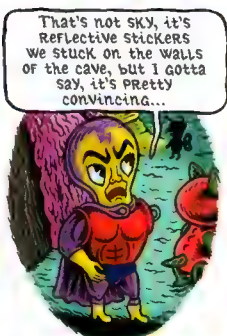
Careful
where you
step, the
ground's
been built
up with
bits and
pieces of use-
less toys...

Pointy

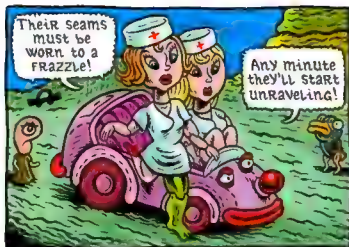


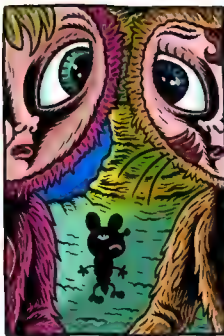
We're
here!

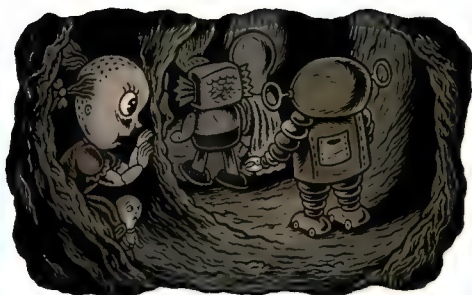




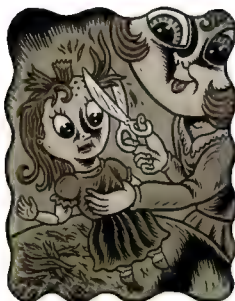






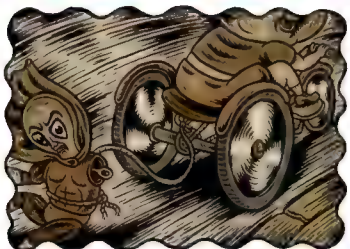


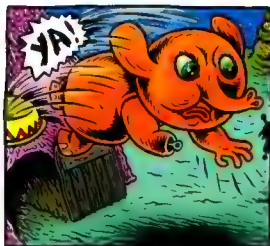
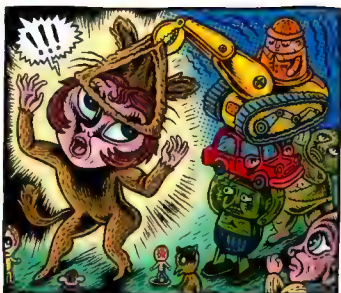
I didn't have time to warn everyone, on top of which, I was afraid... so we hid in a corner...

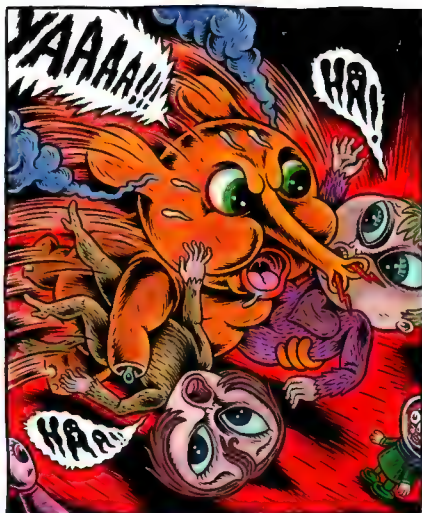


But that's the little hel-lion who tormented me!!

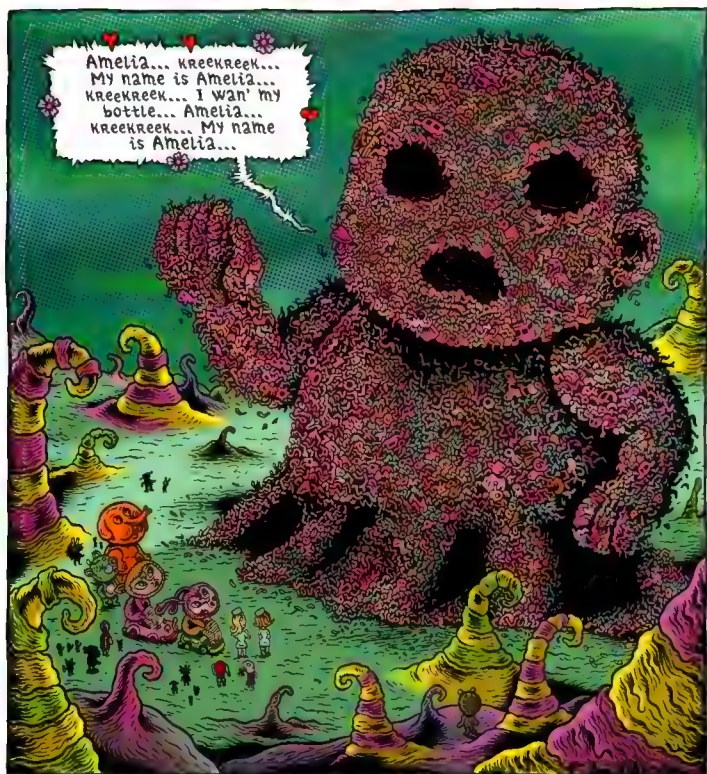
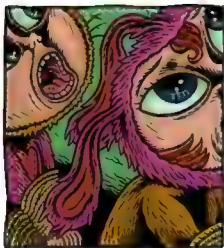
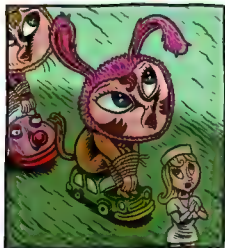
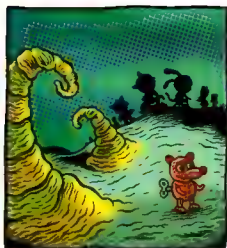


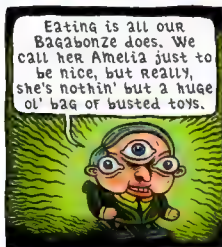


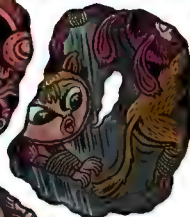
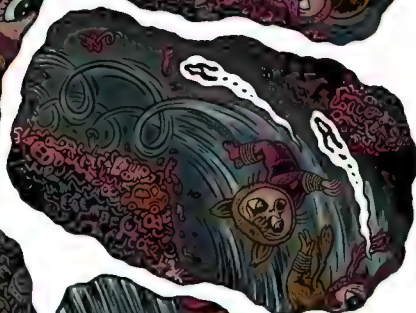
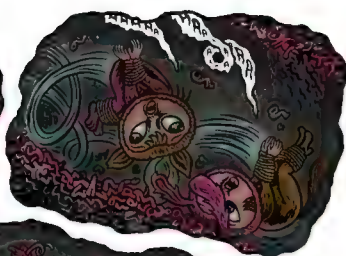






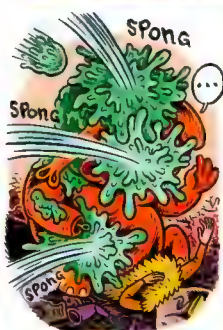
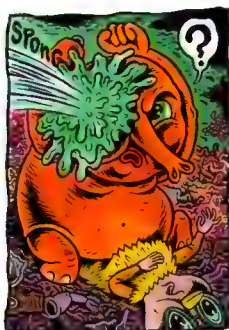
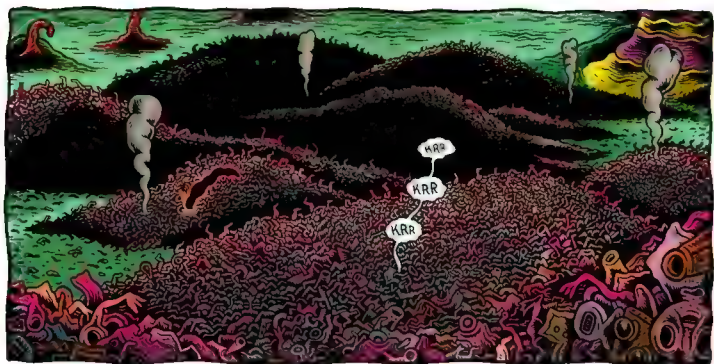




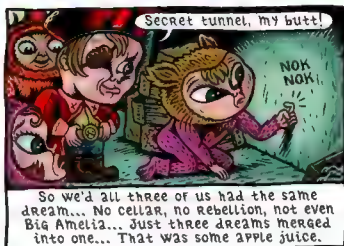
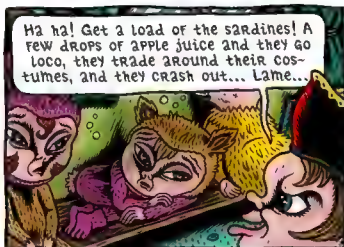














It took me at least a week to stop having nightmares about Big Amelia, a few more days to start sleeping regularly, and a few more to start finding it funny. The bloodthirstiest Pirate of the seven seas had felt awfully constricted in his pink costume, but the rabbit inside me was even more embarrassed that he'd believed that toys had the gift of speech...

A CENTURY OF "BANDE DESSINÉE"

Beginning with the raucous *Les Pieds Nickelés* comic strip created in 1908 by the French cartoonist Louis Forton, French-language comics have brought laughter and thrills to millions upon millions of kids for just over a century now.

La bande dessinée, as they call it, found its uncontested master in 1929 when a young Belgian cartoonist named Georges Remi, inspired by Alain St-Ogan's popular *Zig et Puce* comic strip (itself in turn inspired by 1920s American comic strips), produced the first installments of *Tintin* for *Le Petit Vingtième*. Thanks to the oddly-coiffed young reporter and his dog Snowy, the man who signed his work Hergé became, within a decade, the most popular cartoonist in Europe (and has remained so ever since).

The 25 years after World War II, from 1945 to 1970, were a true golden age for Franco-Belgian comics, published in such hugely popular weekly magazines as *Spirou*, *Tintin*, and *Pilote*. Standout cartoonists included André Franquin (*Spirou*, *Gaston Lagaffe*), Fred (*Philemon*), Jean Giraud (*Blueberry*), E.P. Jacobs (*Blake and Mortimer*), Raymond Macherot (*Chlorophylle* and *Sibylline*), Jacques Martin (*Alix*), Jean-Claude Mézières (*Valérian*), Morris (*Lucky Luke*), Peyo (*The Smurfs*), Maurice Tillieux (*Gil Jourdan*), Will (*Tif et Tondu*), and Hergé's only true rival, the René Goscinny/Albert Uderzo team behind the monster hit *Astérix*. And while that golden age is now a receding dot in our rear-view mirror, to this day marvelous new work continues to be created and released by cartoonists young and old.

Many of these great comics have been released in English-language editions by such publishers as NBM, Cinebook, and Little, Brown and Company — but others remain elusive, buried treasures to the American public. We here at Fantagraphics have brought out our finest picks and shovels to unearth some of our favorites.

Our journey into the world of *la bande dessinée* begins with two recent masterpieces by French cartoonists who usually create darker, more adult work: David B. (of *Epileptic* fame), who brings a classic story by the French novelist and songwriter Pierre Mac Orlan, *The Littlest Pirate King*, to sumptuous visual life — while the provocative underground cartoonist Stéphane Blanquet takes us for a visit to the *Toys in the Basement*. Next year will see releases by two Belgian grandmasters whose work has never before been translated into English. *À bientôt!* ("See you soon.")

—Kim Thompson, editor



There is a secret sanctuary for toys who have been abused, broken, and abandoned... but if you're not a toy, BEWARE!

A costume party turns into a terrifying ordeal for a boy and a girl whose innocent basement quest for refreshments leads them to a secret underground society of damaged, disgruntled toys. Now they must struggle to keep their human identities secret, or face the wrath of their suspicious hosts... and the monstrous Amelia!

STEPHANE BLANQUET (b. 1973) is a French cartoonist, animator, filmmaker, doll-maker, photographer and publisher. Although his eerie and disturbing comics have previously been published in *Zero Zero*, *BLAB!*, *Dungeon Monstres*, and *Kramers Ergot*, this is Blanquet's first full book to be translated into English.



SANTA ANNA

